

transportation operator(s). The results or decisions of these transportation planning studies may be used as part of the overall project development process consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and associated implementing regulations (23 CFR part 771 and 40 CFR parts 1500–1508). Specifically, these corridor or subarea studies may result in producing any of the following for a proposed transportation project:

- (1) Purpose and need or goals and objective statement(s);
- (2) General travel corridor and/or general mode(s) definition (e.g., highway, transit, or a highway/transit combination);
- (3) Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives;
- (4) Basic description of the environmental setting; and/or
- (5) Preliminary identification of environmental impacts and environmental mitigation.

(b) Publicly available documents or other source material produced by, or in support of, the transportation planning process described in this subpart may be incorporated directly or by reference into subsequent NEPA documents, in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.21, if:

- (1) The NEPA lead agencies agree that such incorporation will aid in establishing or evaluating the purpose and need for the Federal action, reasonable alternatives, cumulative or other impacts on the human and natural environment, or mitigation of these impacts; and
- (2) The systems-level, corridor, or subarea planning study is conducted with:
  - (i) Involvement of interested State, local, Tribal, and Federal agencies;
  - (ii) Public review;
  - (iii) Reasonable opportunity to comment during the metropolitan transportation planning process and development of the corridor or subarea planning study;
  - (iv) Documentation of relevant decisions in a form that is identifiable and available for review during the NEPA scoping process and can be appended to

or referenced in the NEPA document; and

(v) The review of the FHWA and the FTA, as appropriate.

(c) By agreement of the NEPA lead agencies, the above integration may be accomplished through tiering (as described in 40 CFR 1502.20), incorporating the subarea or corridor planning study into the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment, or other means that the NEPA lead agencies deem appropriate.

(d) For transit fixed guideway projects requiring an Alternatives Analysis (49 U.S.C. 5309(d) and (e)), the Alternatives Analysis described in 49 CFR part 611 constitutes the planning required by section 1308 of the TEA–21. The Alternatives Analysis may or may not be combined with the preparation of a NEPA document (e.g., a draft EIS). When an Alternatives Analysis is separate from the preparation of a NEPA document, the results of the Alternatives Analysis may be used during a subsequent environmental review process as described in paragraph (a).

(e) Additional information to further explain the linkages between the transportation planning and project development/NEPA processes is contained in Appendix A to this part, including an explanation that it is non-binding guidance material.

**§ 450.320 Congestion management process in transportation management areas.**

(a) The transportation planning process in a TMA shall address congestion management through a process that provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy, of new and existing transportation facilities eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 through the use of travel demand reduction and operational management strategies.

(b) The development of a congestion management process should result in

multimodal system performance measures and strategies that can be reflected in the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP. The level of system performance deemed acceptable by State and local transportation officials may vary by type of transportation facility, geographic location (metropolitan area or subarea), and/or time of day. In addition, consideration should be given to strategies that manage demand, reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) travel, and improve transportation system management and operations. Where the addition of general purpose lanes is determined to be an appropriate congestion management strategy, explicit consideration is to be given to the incorporation of appropriate features into the SOV project to facilitate future demand management strategies and operational improvements that will maintain the functional integrity and safety of those lanes.

(c) The congestion management process shall be developed, established, and implemented as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process that includes coordination with transportation system management and operations activities. The congestion management process shall include:

(1) Methods to monitor and evaluate the performance of the multimodal transportation system, identify the causes of recurring and non-recurring congestion, identify and evaluate alternative strategies, provide information supporting the implementation of actions, and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented actions;

(2) Definition of congestion management objectives and appropriate performance measures to assess the extent of congestion and support the evaluation of the effectiveness of congestion reduction and mobility enhancement strategies for the movement of people and goods. Since levels of acceptable system performance may vary among local communities, performance measures should be tailored to the specific needs of the area and established cooperatively by the State(s), affected MPO(s), and local officials in consultation with the operators of major modes of transportation in the coverage area;

(3) Establishment of a coordinated program for data collection and system performance monitoring to define the extent and duration of congestion, to contribute in determining the causes of congestion, and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of implemented actions. To the extent possible, this data collection program should be coordinated with existing data sources (including archived operational/ITS data) and coordinated with operations managers in the metropolitan area;

(4) Identification and evaluation of the anticipated performance and expected benefits of appropriate congestion management strategies that will contribute to the more effective use and improved safety of existing and future transportation systems based on the established performance measures. The following categories of strategies, or combinations of strategies, are some examples of what should be appropriately considered for each area:

(i) Demand management measures, including growth management and congestion pricing;

(ii) Traffic operational improvements;

(iii) Public transportation improvements;

(iv) ITS technologies as related to the regional ITS architecture; and

(v) Where necessary, additional system capacity;

(5) Identification of an implementation schedule, implementation responsibilities, and possible funding sources for each strategy (or combination of strategies) proposed for implementation; and

(6) Implementation of a process for periodic assessment of the effectiveness of implemented strategies, in terms of the area's established performance measures. The results of this evaluation shall be provided to decisionmakers and the public to provide guidance on selection of effective strategies for future implementation.

(d) In a TMA designated as non-attainment area for ozone or carbon monoxide pursuant to the Clean Air Act, Federal funds may not be programmed for any project that will result in a significant increase in the carrying capacity for SOVs (*i.e.*, a new

general purpose highway on a new location or adding general purpose lanes, with the exception of safety improvements or the elimination of bottlenecks), unless the project is addressed through a congestion management process meeting the requirements of this section.

(e) In TMAs designated as nonattainment for ozone or carbon monoxide, the congestion management process shall provide an appropriate analysis of reasonable (including multimodal) travel demand reduction and operational management strategies for the corridor in which a project that will result in a significant increase in capacity for SOVs (as described in paragraph (d) of this section) is proposed to be advanced with Federal funds. If the analysis demonstrates that travel demand reduction and operational management strategies cannot fully satisfy the need for additional capacity in the corridor and additional SOV capacity is warranted, then the congestion management process shall identify all reasonable strategies to manage the SOV facility safely and effectively (or to facilitate its management in the future). Other travel demand reduction and operational management strategies appropriate for the corridor, but not appropriate for incorporation into the SOV facility itself, shall also be identified through the congestion management process. All identified reasonable travel demand reduction and operational management strategies shall be incorporated into the SOV project or committed to by the State and MPO for implementation.

(f) State laws, rules, or regulations pertaining to congestion management systems or programs may constitute the congestion management process, if the FHWA and the FTA find that the State laws, rules, or regulations are consistent with, and fulfill the intent of, the purposes of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303.

**§ 450.322 Development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan.**

(a) The metropolitan transportation planning process shall include the development of a transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year plan-

ning horizon as of the effective date. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the effective date of the transportation plan shall be the date of a conformity determination issued by the FHWA and the FTA. In attainment areas, the effective date of the transportation plan shall be its date of adoption by the MPO.

(b) The transportation plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

(c) The MPO shall review and update the transportation plan at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every five years in attainment areas to confirm the transportation plan's validity and consistency with current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends and to extend the forecast period to at least a 20-year planning horizon. In addition, the MPO may revise the transportation plan at any time using the procedures in this section without a requirement to extend the horizon year. The transportation plan (and any revisions) shall be approved by the MPO and submitted for information purposes to the Governor. Copies of any updated or revised transportation plans must be provided to the FHWA and the FTA.

(d) In metropolitan areas that are in nonattainment for ozone or carbon monoxide, the MPO shall coordinate the development of the metropolitan transportation plan with the process for developing transportation control measures (TCMs) in a State Implementation Plan (SIP).

(e) The MPO, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) shall validate data utilized in preparing other existing modal plans for providing input to the transportation plan. In updating the transportation plan, the MPO shall base the update on the latest available estimates and assumptions for population, land use, travel, employment, congestion, and economic activity. The MPO shall approve transportation plan contents and